

**Suggested Remarks for  
USAID Economic Growth Advisor Robert F. Barnes  
CLIC Turn-over Ceremony  
Spottswood National High School  
Kidapawan City  
September 07, 2006**

Principal Rosalinda Lonzaga;  
PTCA President Cirilo Intong;  
Colleagues from the United States Government and  
the GEM Program;  
Teachers and Students;  
Ladies and Gentlemen.

Asalamu Alaikum! Good afternoon and Mabuhay!

It is indeed a great pleasure and a privilege on  
my part to be here with you all today, as we  
turn over a CLIC Assistance Package to  
Spottswood National High School in Kidapawan  
City.

This afternoon we are providing seven internet-  
connected computers, a printer, and related

items to the PTCA and the school. These internet-connected computers are being provided under USAID's Computer Literacy and Internet Connection, or CLIC Program, which encourages teachers and students to use computers and the internet as resources to enhance learning.

The computers also enable students to tap the vast resources of the internet to conduct research, establish their own e-mail accounts, and communicate with other students throughout the world.

The internet connection provides you with access to a vast highway that can take you beyond the borders of your community, beyond your province,

and beyond your country, and indeed, to any destination in the world.

You can now be connected, at the click of a mouse, to information and to people from other societies and cultures all around the world.

So, though you may live geographically in Central Mindanao, you now are part of an interconnected, borderless world.

Some sociologists and economists see the peoples of the world as being split into two distinct groups: those with access to the new information technologies, and those without such access. They refer to the split as "the digital divide." Those people without access to the new

technologies are seen as being on "the wrong side of the digital divide." The American people's objective in supporting the CLIC program is to try to make sure that children in Central Mindanao do not end up on the wrong side of the digital divide.

As a CLIC partner, the Spottswood National High School received the resources needed to get its students started on the road to the global information community. Through CLIC, this school thus becomes part of an expanding network of 371 schools in Mindanao that are participating in the global community. By August 2007, we anticipate that at least 600 schools in Mindanao will have been provided

internet-connected computers by the CLIC Program.

This installation really does represent a true partnership, between the US and Philippines Governments, on the one hand, and the parents and teachers of this school, represented here today by Mr. Intong, the President of the Spottswood National High School PTCA, on the other hand. The PTCA has agreed to accept financial responsibility for the maintenance of these computers, and for paying the costs of the internet connection fees at the end of one year.

We recognize and understand that the seven computers being turned over here today may not be sufficient to provide every student in this

school with as much computer time as he or she would like, or might need. But we think these computers provide a good start. And we are prepared to do more. We will increase the number of computers provided to this school, if you will also do more.

If the PTCA is prepared, using resources it obtains from its own members or from the community at large, to procure additional computers for the school, we will match whatever the PTCA does by providing up to ten additional computers. If the PTCA will provide one additional computer, so will we! If the PTCA will provide three additional computers, we will also provide three additional computers. If the

PTCA will provide an additional five, we will also provide five more.

This is our challenge to you, as President of the PTCA, Mr. Intong, and to the members of the PTCA. I hope that, together, we will be able to expand the current facilities, and strengthen our partnership with the PTCA, with the parents, and, most importantly, with the students.

Mr. PTCA President, the ball is in your court.

Thank you, Principal Lonzaga and PTCA President Intong, for representing and supporting the Spottswood National High School so ably and effectively. Thanks also to all of you present here for your warm welcome and hospitality.

Wasallam!